The Origins of the Oxford Conference Within the Networks of 1930s Student Activism

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The Origins of the Oxford Conference Within the Networks of 1930s Student Activism

It is sixty years since the Oxford Conference of 1958, which established the present-day model of British architectural education as a primarily intellectual pursuit carried out within a university environment. This article traces the origins of this model to a network of young activists of the 1930s led by Leslie Martin, Richard Llewelyn Davies, Richard Sheppard, Max Lock, Justin Blanco White and others. Walter Gropius addressed a number of key student meetings of the period, offering a major stimulus to the radicalism of the young. The resulting network sought to reform architectural education through student activism, aiming to produce architects adapted to the technical and intellectual challenges of modernism, and fit to work in the increasingly large and ambitious architectural offices of the public sector. The Oxford Conference is commonly portrayed as the culmination of a campaign hatched by a coterie of official architects infiltrating the RIBA. This paper adds to the understanding of the conference by demonstrating its origins within the fevered and energetic climate of 1930s student activism pervading not just the Architectural Association but national organisations such as the Northern Architectural Students' Association and the RIBA Junior Members' Committee. As architectural education once again comes under scrutiny, this article rediscovers the atmosphere of student-led optimism, belief in progress, and passionate commitment to architecture as a public service which underpinned the origins of the current educational landscape. It also offers a reminder that reforming architectural education can be a slow and lengthy process.

Keywords: Oxford Conference; Leslie Martin; Richard Llewelyn Davies; Architectural Association; architectural education; Yellow Book

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Introduction

In April 1958 Leslie Martin chaired a three-day conference at Oxford to advise the RIBA upon the future pattern of architectural education in Britain. The preceding decade had witnessed the rise of the public sector and a gradual turn of architecture from a craft-based to a technological pursuit driven by building research. Welcomed by prewar pioneers such as Martin as a partial fulfilment of their modernist vision, these developments at the same time

challenged the architect's customary role as the leader of the building team, not least because competing professions such as engineers and quantity surveyors were revising their training methods to attract more high-calibre students to their courses. The Oxford Conference marked the moment when the RIBA adapted its educational framework to these changing conditions by calling for higher entry standards and a commitment to recognised school training as the sole route into the profession, with schools themselves being situated in universities or institutions of a comparable standard and offering full-time or 'sandwich' courses with ample provision for postgraduate studies.[i]

Crinson and Lubbock in their seminal survey of the history of architectural education in Britain portray the Oxford Conference as the outcome of a long-term campaign driven by a conspiratorial clique of official architects intent on creating a uniform system of education 'aimed at serving a largely nationalised architectural production.'[ii] Their view is that, having taken control of the RIBA, these public-sector modernists 'rigged'[iii] its conference on architectural education by limiting attendance to fifty-two carefully selected participants, amongst them the 'key figures'[iv] of their circle, viz. Leslie Martin, Richard Llewelyn Davies, Richard Sheppard, William Allen, Percy Johnson-Marshall and Robert Matthew.

Others left a manifest imprint on the conference resolutions, most notably perhaps Antony Part, the under-secretary of the Ministry of Education. The mention (in addition to universities) of 'institutions of a comparable standard', for instance, referred to the government's concurrent drive to transform polytechnics into 'colleges of advanced technology', whilst sandwich courses – well-established in other professions but, with the exception of Scotland, unknown in British architectural education – was the Ministry's preferred mode of professional training. Nonetheless, in its core demand for full-time training of a high academic standard the Oxford Conference adopted the pedagogical agenda of Martin's coterie.

This paper traces the origin of this agenda in the energetic climate of 1930s student activism. It does not enquire into the various factors which contributed to the educational debate in the postwar period but seeks to demonstrate that, like the architectural sea change to which this debate responded, the notion that such change called for a correspondingly modified educational framework had its roots in the interwar period. By showing that already two decades prior to the Oxford Conference a considerable number of its leading figures, including Martin and Llewelyn Davies, had tried to influence the RIBA's educational policy through the agency of three youth organisations, the paper suggests a different reading of this crucial event in the history of British architectural education.

The student activism which will be discussed in this paper emerged largely from the recognised schools of architecture. Up until the mid-1930s (and in some cases far beyond that) most of these operated on an American-derived Beaux-Arts model and were under the charge of powerful and often autocratic principals who controlled both curriculum and staff selection and thereby had a decisive influence on the nature and outlook of their schools. This applied in particular to the two oldest, largest and most renowned British schools of architecture, the Architectural Association (AA) in London and the Liverpool School of Architecture, which were headed Howard Robertson and Charles Reilly, respectively – both apologists of the Beaux-Arts system but, particularly in the later years of their tenures, sufficiently open-minded to allow their students considerable latitude in the choice of their stylistic vocabulary.[v]

Modernism entered the British debate in the late 1920s and it soon left its mark in schoolwork. Encouraged by sympathetic members of staff such as R. A. Duncan at the AA and Gordon Stephenson at Liverpool, in the early 1930s enterprising students began to infuse their Beaux-Arts programmes with the formal features of modern architecture, and by July 1934 a great number of them had, as one dismayed commentator observed, succumbed to its

'lure [which] now permeates the curricula through and through.'[vi] However, there is, as Crinson and Lubbock point out, 'an important distinction to be made between work produced in a modernist mode and distinctively modernist educational techniques. By and large the second of these were absent in British schools.'[vii] Indeed, the institutional impact of modernist staff and students remained at first limited. At Liverpool, Stephenson from autumn 1932 formed his fourth-year students into groups and encouraged them to conduct extensive research into housing, schools and other relevant building tasks.[viii] More profound changes along similar lines occurred at the AA in spring 1936, when Robertson's successor E. A. A. Rowse introduced a new school system based on small units and appointed staff who shared his predilection for group work exercises and planning surveys.

Historians have generally emphasised the modernist nature of such novelties, particularly as regards the AA's unit system, which is frequently illustrated through the two best-known student projects of the period: the 'Town Plan', a group thesis completed under Rowse in 1938, and 'Ocean Street Area', a fourth-year slum clearance scheme supervised by Max Lock one year after.[ix] However, there is no reason to assume that such projects were in any way representative of the course, certainly not in the early years of Rowse's principalship. Both at the AA and at Liverpool (and at a number of schools which followed in their wake) innovative pedagogical methods continued to coexist with more traditional ones.

At Liverpool, Stephenson orchestrated a backroom intrigue against the conservative elements within his school,[x] but it was at the volatile AA where such conflicts erupted publicly in the second half of 1936, resulting in a two-year stand-off between Rowse's young modernists and the adherents of the Beaux-Arts system around director Harry Goodhart-Rendel. The AA students' committee was actively involved in these altercations and in May 1937 issued a contentious report on the school system.[xi] Generally known as the Yellow Book, the report put forward a number of measures by which the students hoped to overcome

the ambiguity of the existing course in favour of a modernist curriculum, and when they publicised it two years later in their magazine *Focus* they proclaimed it as the 'first tentative step to clarify the basis on which a modern school should rest'.[xii]

Subsequent scholarship has affirmed, if not amplified the authors' claim. According to Crinson and Lubbock, the Yellow Book was 'one of the first manifestos of modernist architectural education produced in this country,'[xiii] and Elizabeth Darling considers it not just a 'tentative step' but rather a 'definite statement of what they believe a modernist education should comprise.'[xiv] The historic relevance of the Yellow Book derives from the fact that with its call for a more academic approach based on higher entry standards it anticipated one of the core ideas which were to infuse the discourse on architectural education after the war.

This paper does not challenge the significance of the Yellow Book, but it presents it as a contribution to a debate which took place not just within the AA students' committee but in a wider context of student activism in the 1930s. The two organisations which constitute this context – the Northern Architectural Students' Association (est. 1934) and the RIBA's Junior Members' Committee (est. 1935) – have both thus far escaped the attention of historians. In examining their educational reform agenda, the paper will argue that the wish to alter the parameters of architectural training was not limited to the AA students' committee but shared and to some extent preceded by students and young architects across the country. It was in these circles that the idea of an educational approach commensurate with the new architecture first took hold. Unprecedented in Britain, this idea of a distinctly modernist education had been pioneered by the Bauhaus, and the paper will highlight the crucial role of Walter Gropius in giving direct impulses to British students and young architects.

The Northern Architectural Students' Association (1934-39)

In the second half of 1933 architectural students from the university schools in Manchester and Newcastle-upon-Tyne gathered for a series of informal discussions. Towards the end of

the year these discussions led to a proposal to call a congress of students from all schools in the north of Britain 'to afford opportunity for a first airing of views on questions of moment affecting the present or future interests of architectural students.'[xv]

What were these questions affecting the students' interests? In 1931 the government had passed the first Registration Act, which effectively restricted the use of the title of registered architect to those who passed an RIBA-approved examination. The fact that professional status would henceforth be predicated on architects' having attained the academic standards set by the RIBA inevitably heightened the attraction of those institutions whose courses were recognised as meeting these standards. The Registration Act came into force at a time when the country was recovering from depression, which severely affected the employment prospects of young architects as most private practices were neither able to offer job security to their employees nor office experience to those still in training. This situation continued even when, from 1933 onward, the building industry gathered pace, and it raised the appeal of local authority employment for young and social-minded architects, particularly when architects' departments of cities such as Liverpool and Leeds began to embark on ambitious housing and slum clearance schemes.[xvi] Meanwhile, the foundation of the Modern Architectural Research (MARS) Group in March 1933 concluded the 'pioneer phase'[xvii] of the British modern movement, which cast its spell over a young generation currently in training at the schools of architecture. Registration assured that these schools had an increasingly important part to play, whilst the dual rise of modernism and the public sector indicated the need for them to amend an educational approach hitherto centred upon the Beaux-Arts conception of the architect as an isolated creator versed in the time-honoured principles of classical composition.

Change was in the air, and for students in the north it seemed particularly pronounced due to the fact that several schools witnessed a simultaneous shift in leadership. In February

1933 Charles Reilly announced his retirement as head of the Liverpool School and was replaced by his long-time deputy Lionel Budden, a classicist who, to the surprise of many, adopted Reilly's liberal attitude and embraced modernism in his inaugural lecture.[xviii] Budden handed over his post as senior lecturer to the 26-year-old William Holford, who had just completed his Rome Scholarship. Less headline-grabbing but equally profound changes occurred in other northern schools. In summer 1933 Leeds appointed Joseph S. Allen, formerly a lecturer at Liverpool, as its new principal; Edinburgh appointed James Macgregor, then a studio master at the AA, as the new head of its school; Manchester appointed R. A. Cordingley, previously in charge of Newcastle, as its new director; and Newcastle in turn appointed W. B. Edwards, who had been second-in-command at Manchester, as its principal. One year later, in June 1934, Hull appointed Leslie Martin, previously a lecturer and studio master at Manchester, as the head of its school. The common trait of these new principals was their youth – only Macgregor was past his mid-thirties and Martin was merely twenty-six – and whilst this in itself was not tantamount to a more progressive disposition, a shift towards a more modernist approach was noticeable at all these schools, and particularly so at Leeds and at Hull.

These then were the 'questions of moment' affecting the interests of architectural students in the north of Britain. By 1933 several schools and 'allied societies' (regional subsidiaries of the RIBA) had formed their own student sections, and the proposal to coordinate their activities on a regional level thus fell on fertile soil. At the students' congress, which took place in Manchester in February 1934, the two co-organising student bodies (Manchester and Newcastle) along with the four which had taken up their invitation (Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds and Sheffield) inaugurated the North British Architectural Students' Association (NBASA), forming a council to oversee the organisation of student competitions, international summer tours and an annual congress.[xix] In December the RIBA

council agreed to make an annual grant to the NBASA, thereby putting it on a secure financial footing, and at the second congress in Glasgow in February 1935 the participants (now including students from Hull and Aberdeen) agreed on a constitution which laid down the objectives of the association. These were:

(a) Educational: To promote unity in national architectural ideals. To examine proposals for the improvement of architectural education. To examine collaborative propositions for student training.

(b) Social: To disseminate new ideas. To widen social and professional experience. To promote good will and stimulate interest.

(c) Professional: To study conditions of architectural practice. To explore the scope of professional practice along specialist lines.[xx]

Of these objectives, educational reform soon took precedence as the NBASA council launched an investigation into architectural training. In November 1935 Walter Gropius, who had arrived in the United Kingdom twelve months prior and whose first English-language book on the Bauhaus had just been published, was invited by the NBASA to deliver the keynote speech at its forthcoming congress in Newcastle.[xxi] Though unable to present new material due to language barriers, Gropius attended and energised the congress, which took place in February 1936.[xxii] At the general meeting following his 'brilliant and inspiring'[xxiii] speech the delegates decided to rename the association the Northern Architectural Students' Association (NASA) and adopted a number of proposals on architectural education put forward by the students from Sheffield and Hull.[xxiv] In December the council included these resolutions in a report on the activities of the NASA, which it submitted to the RIBA in the hope of persuading it to continue its annual grant.[xxv] The RIBA, however, did not accede to this request and announced that from autumn 1937 the grant would be discontinued.[xxvi]

Anticipating the RIBA's move, in June 1936 the NASA council had decided to levy a subscription charge on each individual member of the association.[xxvii] To the council's relief, this had no adverse effect on either the NASA's membership figures or its scope of activities, particularly since it simultaneously managed to persuade Liverpool's large and enterprising students' society to join the association.[xxviii] Liverpool's participation more than compensated for the general inactivity of the Scottish schools as the congress at Leeds in February 1937 turned out the largest to date and the expenditure involved in running the association engendered a greater sense of purpose within its council.[xxix] Concomitant with the congress it published the first issue of the *NASA Journal*, and later that year it decided to launch a comprehensive research policy, merging its ongoing investigation into architectural education into a comprehensive report on the whole profession to be jointly drafted by all member-schools.[xxx] Moreover, emboldened by the growing stature and organisational acumen of the NASA, which at the time of the congress comprised all schools in the north of Britain, Richard Thompson, the president of both the Leeds Architectural Students' Association and the NASA, announced his plan of transforming the latter into a countrywide entity:

> The Association at present is provincial, but its aims are national. […] I look forward with confidence to the time when the Association will represent student opinion in all the recognised schools in the country, becoming in time the 'British Architectural Students' Association'.[xxxi]

The council in June 1937 endorsed this vision and invited the cooperation of the southern schools with a view to forming a national body of architectural students.[xxxii] Two of these schools – the AA and Cardiff – sent observers to the fifth annual congress in Liverpool in February 1938, which sanctioned the council's policy to stimulate the establishment of a 'southern section' and seek liaison with various national organisations such as the RIBA, the National Union of Students and the Association of Architects, Surveyors and Technical Assistants (AASTA).[xxxiii]

The pre-war endeavours of the NASA reached their climax at the following congress in Hull in March 1939. Acting as vice-president, Leslie Martin – who over the past five years had turned his school into a small but renowned (and since 1937 RIBA-recognised) 'centre of advanced modernity in architectural thought and design'[xxxiv] – was instrumental in luring an extraordinary array of speakers to a symposium on 'Architecture, Science, Economics and Society', which featured contributions by Serge Chermayeff, J. D. Bernal, Eric Roll and Edward 'Bobby' Carter.[xxxv] Following the conference, the NASA decided to intensify its efforts of merging with the southern schools, to undertake a survey of the conditions of the apprenticeship system in conjunction with the AASTA, and to arrange a programme of co-operation with the MARS Group.[xxxvi] Such were the ambitions of the NASA in March 1939, the month in which Germany occupied Czechoslovakia and war began to look inevitable.

The RIBA's Junior Members' Committee (1935-39)

Organised student activism originated in the north, but it soon found its counterpart in the capital.

The RIBA was at the time controlled by its fellows, who were either principals in private practice or otherwise in a 'position of responsibility for the design of architectural work'.[xxxvii] Associate members in salaried employment were virtually excluded from its governance, and the formal setting of its general meetings, where debates were routinely confined to senior members, further entrenched the generational divisions within the RIBA.

In early 1934 the RIBA came under growing pressure to give a platform to its younger members as the AASTA, which represented a considerable number of assistant architects, severed its ties with the RIBA and withdrew its representatives from its committees.[xxxviii] It was in this context that the RIBA council in December agreed to grant financial support to the NBASA and announced that from the following month a series of informal general meetings would be held for the benefit of students and young associates. The brainchild of L. W.

Thornton White, then a lecturer at the Regent Street Polytechnic and secretary of the RIBA's science committee, informal general meetings opened with short and provocative statements from invited speakers rather than formal papers and barred members of the press from attending in order to encourage young members to 'freely and boldly express their opinions.'[xxxix]

The first three informal general meetings (on standardisation, on improving the usefulness of the RIBA, and on the representation of architects in local and national government) addressed the concerns of salaried architects and proved popular with students and associate members. Yet they did not satisfy those who sought for a more direct say in the Institute's affairs. In February 1935 Berthold Lubetkin and Francis Skinner of the renowned modernist practice Tecton formed the left-leaning Architects' and Technicians Organisation (ATO), which from the outset had its own student section.[xl] In the same month, Val Harding, another member of Tecton, issued a letter to the architectural press urging the 'young and progressive members [to] realise and make use of their powers at the forthcoming election of officers'[xli] by nominating their own candidates, a view in which he was supported by other leading modernists such as Maxwell Fry and Basil Ward.[xlii]

In order to contain the subversive influence of the ATO and the AASTA, the RIBA council in June 1935 approved a resolution made at an informal general meeting to set up a special committee for its younger members.[xliii] Headed by Thornton White, the Junior Members' Committee (JMC) consisted of twelve council-appointed architects under the age of thirty-five as well as one student representative each from of the four recognised London schools (viz. the AA, the Bartlett, and the two polytechnics).[xliv] Besides keeping the council 'informed of the views, activities and interests of the younger members of the profession', the chief tasks of the JMC were to arrange future meetings and to organise working parties and research groups, either on behalf of other RIBA committees or on their own initiative.[xlv]

Like the NASA, the JMC soon directed its attention to pedagogical matters. On 11 December 1935 Walter Gropius accepted an invitation by the JMC to open a discussion on 'Education and the Architect' at its informal general meeting.[xlvi] Gropius's appearance at the London gathering fell into a highly charged context as the AA had in the previous week announced the appointment of a dual headship consisting of director Harry Goodhart-Rendel and principal E. A. A. Rowse, who in turn named Thornton White as his vice-principal.[xlvii] The changeover at the AA and Gropius's address to the meeting triggered a controversy about architectural education in the correspondence columns of the technical press which continued for several months and culminated in a paper read by W. H. Ansell, a former chairman of the Board of Architectural Education, to a general meeting of the Institute in March 1936 and a follow-up discussion at an informal general meeting two months later.[xlviii]

Gropius's attendance at the informal general meeting in December 1935 also inspired the JMC itself, which approved a request by Justin Blanco White to convene a students' subcommittee investigating the training conditions in the recognised and unrecognised schools.[xlix] While the activities of the JMC thus paralleled those of the NASA, its institutional setup made it a rather more cumbersome body. Unlike its northern counterpart, the JMC remained impeded by its affiliation with the RIBA, particularly since its survey of architectural education built on a preceding enquiry carried out by the ATO and was thus almost certain to challenge council policy.[l] In a letter to the *RIBA Journal* in April 1936 Francis Skinner accused the JMC of being a 'stifling ground for the younger and more alert members of the profession and to many progressive ideas,'[li] and in a follow-up letter he reiterated his allegation and questioned the JMC's mandate to represent the general body of junior members by pointing out that its council-imposed embargo on publicity prevented it from keeping in touch with the student movement in the north.[lii] This lack of contact with the NASA was keenly felt by the students' subcommittee, whose members were aware that their

northern colleagues were concurrently conducting their own research into architectural education. To establish a closer link with the northern schools, the JMC in October 1936 appointed Leslie Martin, the principal of the Hull School, in addition to the existing members of its subcommittee, viz. Justin Blanco White, William Holford and the student representatives from the four London schools.[liii] Of these, the most active was the new member for the AA, Richard Llewelyn Davies, who urged his colleagues to invite a representative of the NASA to join the JMC – a proposal which was subsequently rejected by the RIBA council.[liv] At the same time, the Board of Architectural Education blocked the JMC's request to issue a questionnaire to the schools enquiring about their existing and envisioned systems of training – much to the consternation of its retiring chairman, Thornton White:

> I attended the Board of Education meeting on Monday, when the Questionnaire was considered. The Board showed great ignorance about the working of the JMC and took up an attitude of intolerance. […] The attitude of the Board has quite definitely indicated that an enquiry, independent if possible, is highly necessary.[lv]

Unlike the JMC's subcommittee, which remained paralysed by the obstructive stance of the RIBA, the NASA was flourishing and made its intention known to convert itself into a nationwide association, a plan of which the JMC approved.[lvi] As a preliminary to this, and to assist the JMC in its nationwide survey into education, the NASA in December 1937 applied for direct representation on the JMC.[lvii] The JMC strongly supported this request, and on 7 March 1938 the RIBA council eventually granted it.[lviii] Three days later John Elliott, the secretary of the NASA, attended his first JMC meeting in the place of William Holford, who relinquished his seat in favour of a student from his own school.[lix]

In the previous month, the JMC had once more reconstituted its subcommittee, appointing John Brandon-Jones and Leslie Martin in addition to Blanco White, who passed the chair to the only remaining student, AA representative F. L. Sturrock.[lx] With Elliott

joining it as well, the subcommittee (now generally referred to as the 'education sub-committee') gained access to a much wider range of schools and therefore decided to prepare a preliminary report on the basis of information sourced by its own members, hoping that the Board of Architectural Education would subsequently sanction a more limited questionnaire to obtain any missing data required from the schools.[lxi]

In spite of this, the work of the subcommittee remained sluggish and hampered by the fact that – even with NASA representation – the membership of the JMC and therefore the scope of its enquiry did not extend beyond the recognised schools. It could therefore scarcely probe into the conditions of assistants, who often received their training in unrecognised schools (or in no schools at all). Alas, it was this class of students which was of particular concern to the AASTA members on the JMC, specifically Justin Blanco White, the driving force behind its subcommittee and a council member of the AASTA.

To address this issue and make the JMC more broadly representative of the profession as a whole, Blanco White and fellow JMC member Jessica Albery put forward a proposal to alter its composition by allocating a fixed number of seats to people representing the various sections of junior members.[lxii] The RIBA council shrewdly accepted the majority of the suggested personnel but not the principle itself, and – in a move which seemed to confirm Skinner's 'stifling ground' allegation – it used the remodelling of the JMC to purge it of its two most vocal AASTA members, Justin Blanco White and Robert Townsend.[lxiii]

Displeased with the council's decision, the education subcommittee asserted its right of co-option and reappointed Blanco White.[lxiv] Nonetheless, the renewed reshuffle and change in leadership proved disruptive. In December 1938 Sturrock submitted a brief and somewhat muddled draft report, presumably a rush job as he left the country in the following month.[lxv] He was replaced by Richard Sheppard, and the subcommittee in March 1939, after two months of complete inactivity, called on the help of Robert Furneaux Jordan, a senior member

of the AA teaching staff, and Llewelyn Davies (who had left the JMC in May 1937) to prepare a revised version of the report.[lxvi] However, Sheppard's absences and a general sense of apathy delayed the work further, and a second draft was never issued.[lxvii]

The AA Students' Committee (1935-39)

Student activism was a founding principle of the Architectural Association. The AA was formed in 1847 by a group of assistants and articled pupils, and it remained in its tradition to give a voice to its youngest members.[lxviii] In 1920 various pre-existing student societies were reconstituted as sections of the 'students' club', which comprised the entire student body and was managed by the students' committee, whose scope was constitutionally limited to social affairs.[lxix]

Anthony Cox, a key figure on the students' committee in the mid-1930s, later claimed that he and a group of conspiring fellow students, notably Richard Llewelyn Davies, started a revolt against the AA's curriculum soon after they had entered the school in 1933 and 1934, respectively.[lxx] Though there is no evidence for such early activism within the AA itself, both Cox and Llewelyn Davies were members of the ATO's student section and involved in its enquiry into training methods, and in July 1935 they published critical reviews of the school exhibitions at, respectively, the Bartlett and Liverpool, which attest that some serious thinking about education was underway.[lxxi]

It was not until the end of 1935 that the student committee as a whole began to shift its priorities from social to educational issues – 'away from the world of nail-brushes and soap in the lavatories and into the world of conscious expression on the way they were being taught.'[lxxii] The deeper reasons for this shift – registration, rise of modernism, growing appeal of the public sector – were the same as for their fellow students in the north, and as there it was triggered by a change in leadership at their school. In July 1935 Howard Robertson had tendered his resignation, and five months later the AA council promoted assistant director E.

A. A. Rowse to the principalship and appointed Harry Goodhart-Rendel to the, now largely ceremonial, role of director. On 14 January 1936, at his first school committee meeting as principal, Rowse presented a proposal for a reorganisation of the school into fifteen term-based units, each under the charge of a different master.[lxxiii] Unlike present-day incarnations of the 'unit system', Rowse's pioneering scheme involved a trimestrial rather than annual cycle of studio tuition, as each term a new group of students would enter Unit 1 and begin its fifteen-step progression through the school. This would allow the principal to relegate weak students by a single term rather than an entire year; gifted students could be allowed to progress more rapidly through the course; and candidates could be admitted three times a year, which would likely increase the school's revenue. The council eight days later resolved 'that the scheme be proceeded with immediately, in an experimental form,'[lxxiv] and it was introduced at the beginning of the spring term two months later.

It must be assumed that the essence of Rowse's new system had been known before he actually presented it to the council. Rowse had served as Robertson's second-in-command since March 1933, and whilst his influence on the regular school course appears to have been minimal, he had ample opportunity to test his pedagogical ideas in the AA's planning department, which he himself had devised and for which he retained sole responsibility.[lxxv] Faced with a prospective teaching system which was neither the old Beaux-Arts model nor the Bauhaus model which Gropius had promoted at the informal general meeting in the previous month, the AA students' committee embarked on a discussion about the appropriate pedagogical approach for the modern era. No records of this discussion were kept, but much of it filtered through to the correspondence columns of the architectural press, inciting, as mentioned earlier, a controversy which in its initial stages at the turn of the year 1935/36 was dominated by AA students dismissing the prevalent training methods as being divorced from reality and unrelated to the social and technical conditions of their age.[lxxvi]

At a meeting on 16 January 1936, AA students approved the unit system and put forward a number of suggestions to improve it, specifically the extension of group work arrangements, the abolition of marks, and the participation of students in the writing of programmes.[lxxvii] Similar ideas infused the debate in the architectural press, which, however, remained short of contributions presenting a comprehensive vision for the future education of architects. One notable exception was a tentative outline policy put forward by eleven anonymous (but almost certainly AA) students in March 1936.[lxxviii] Inspired by Rowse's unit system, the students called for schools to be subdivided into 'unit groups' of fifteen to twenty students supervised by two full-time members of staff, whose main purpose it was to 'stimulate and guide development.'[lxxix] The programmes for studio problems would be drawn up collaboratively by staff and students; the work itself would involve a considerable amount of research and be neither competitive nor time-limited; and the final criticism would be in the form of a discussion between the student and the examiners. The majority of the lecture course would be delivered as so-called 'lecture-discussions', informal talks given round a table to a small group of students, with 'straight' lectures discarded in all but a few advanced subjects and with written examinations kept to a minimum.[lxxx]

The students' plan was the most mature contribution to the debate in the architectural press, but it too did not specify how its pedagogical novelties could be translated into a practicable curriculum and left a range of questions unanswered. In a statement following Ansell's paper to the RIBA two weeks later Martin Briggs, the schools inspector of the government's Board of Education and as such an influential member of the RIBA's Board of Architectural Education, summarised these as follows:

> The first is, do you want more science? […] Do you want an entrance barrier in mathematics and science higher than at present? […] Or do you want more science after you get into the architectural school? If so, what sort of science, how much of it, and what must go to provide more room for it in the time-table? Secondly, do you want less

> architectural history or a different sort of architectural history? […] Finally, there is a plea for fewer examinations. How is that to be done? This Institute has accepted registration, and with it some form of examination. If you can see any alternative to that, you are cleverer than I am, and I should like to know about it.[lxxxi]

The discussions within the AA students' committee in the second half of 1936 revolved around these questions and were increasingly held in the form of formal (yet never officially sanctioned) meetings with sympathetic members of staff such as Rowse, Thornton White and Jordan, who in January 1937 invited the students to compile their ideas in the form of a report.[lxxxii] The students' initial work coincided with a controversial speech on architectural education given by Goodhart-Rendel in February 1937.[lxxxiii] Invited by the council to lay down his ideals as a 'definite creed'[lxxxiv], the director rejected the changes which were taking place in the curriculum, specifically the abolition of Beaux-Arts exercises, the tendency to complicate design programmes and, as a consequence thereof, the prevalence of 'research' and 'co-operation'.[lxxxv] Yet to the authors of the 'Report of Students' Sub-committee on the School System', issued in May 1937 and better known as the 'Yellow Book', these changes did not go nearly far enough. Addressing the questions raised by Briggs, the students called for higher entry standards to facilitate a more advanced lecture course, criticised the compartmentalisation of subjects and, in the concluding section, demanded a remodelling of the history course as a 'history of social movements' rather than a 'history of architecture', and with particular emphasis on the immediate past.[lxxxvi]

The students envisaged the Yellow Book as 'the first tentative step to clarify the basis on which a modern school should rest,'[lxxxvii] but their intention to follow it up with a second report advancing definite proposals to improve the curriculum was soon confounded by events in the school. In February 1938 Goodhart-Rendel, who had not thus far commented on the Yellow Book, addressed a general meeting of the AA on 'The Training of an Architect'.[lxxxviii] To the students' dismay, Goodhart-Rendel remained steadfast in his

appreciation of the virtues of Beaux-Arts training and left no doubt about his desire to reverse the educational trends of the past couple of years. Despite the students' opposition, expressed in a series of increasingly heated meetings with the authorities and culminating in the temporary resignation of the students' committee, the council concurred with Goodhart-Rendel's view and felt that a new principal was needed to effect the desired change of direction.[lxxxix] On 3 May it relieved Rowse of his duties, and two months later it appointed French Beaux-Arts classicist Fernand Billerey as interim principal.[xc]

It was in this situation that two students, Tim Bennett and Leo De Syllas, decided to launch a magazine to rally the support of those who shared their desire for a reform of their training. With Anthony Cox, who had recently graduated, as joint editor and main contributor, *Focus* was chiefly responsible for making the turbulent events at the AA known to a wider public and securing their place in the narrative of the modern movement in Britain. The inaugural issue of the magazine in summer 1938 featured a censorious letter from Anthony Cox to Goodhart-Rendel in reply to his talk at the AA and the second one, published half a year later, a brief justification of the students' conduct in their recent altercations with the school authorities.[xci] Meanwhile, things were taking an unexpected turn as Goodhart-Rendel, who was working with Billerey on a scheme for the reorganisation of the school, urged the council to either extend the latter's contract by another year or appoint another suitable person for the same period of time to get the new system running smoothly before a new principal took over.[xcii] Dissatisfied with the council's refusal to consider either suggestion, Goodhart-Rendel in July 1938 tendered his resignation – enthusiastically welcomed by the students' committee but only reluctantly accepted by a council fearful of giving the impression that its hand 'had been forced by the criticism of the students.'[xciii] Anxious to bridge the divisions within the school, the council merged the posts of director and principal and in October appointed Geoffrey Jellicoe, a 'benign but nevertheless committed modernist'.[xciv] In his

inaugural address to the school in February 1939, Jellicoe announced that the meetings between staff and students (which the council had disallowed seven months prior) would be reinstated and that the present school system would be continued pending a review by an advisory panel comprising, amongst others, Jordan and Cox.[xcv]

The students' committee's successful campaign for educational reform had not escaped the attention of the NASA, whose attempts to stimulate the foundation of a southern section through the agency of the JMC were stalling. The JMC endorsed a recommendation to that effect in Sturrock's draft report, but its inertia frustrated any attempt to implement it.[xcvi] In light of that, direct collaboration with the vigorous AA students' committee seemed to offer the NASA a more promising way forward. The respect was mutual as AA students had been following events in the north with growing interest. In November 1936 Llewelyn Davies had actively promoted a link between the JMC and the NASA, and in February 1938 AA representatives had attended the annual NASA congress in Liverpool to participate in its discussion regarding an expansion of its scope across the whole of Britain. Their intention to launch a southern association had subsequently foundered on the lack of support from other schools as well as the resistance of the AA council, which on the advice of Goodhart-Rendel (ironically the patron of the NASA) explicitly prohibited the formation of the 'Southern Architectural Students' Association' from within the AA.[xcvii]

Even so, *Focus* continued to promote the idea of a southern affiliate of the NASA on its pages,[xcviii] and in February 1939 De Syllas attended the NASA's annual congress at Hull accompanied by a member of the AA students' committee, who pledged active collaboration on behalf of his organisation.[xcix] By summer 1939 the NASA was working on a plan to formalise this collaboration by incorporating the AA as a separate 'unit' within its framework.[c] *Focus*, with its wider appeal and established policy of independent criticism was to 'take over what might be called the propaganda side of our organisation' whilst the *NASA*

Journal would be issued at shorter intervals as a 'small pamphlet' whose main scope would be within the association.[ci] The announcement in the fourth (and final) issue of *Focus* of a new editorial policy, which, 'while covering a broader field than the NASA, would not overlap any of their activities,' seems to reflect this plan.[cii] Yet with the outbreak of war it, too, turned out to be an impasse.

The Birth of the Architectural Students' Association (1939-41)

The war rendered questions of education immaterial and appeared to put an end to the prospect of merging the three strands of student activism into a unified national body. With several of its members appointed to government positions, the JMC was unable to continue its work.[ciii] The last informal general meeting took place in early May 1939, and on 25 July the JMC held its final committee meeting.[civ] For a while the remaining members of the JMC continued their work informally, organising two more public meetings at the AA in conjunction with its students' committee.[cv] However, following the second of these, in May 1940, the JMC dissolved and was never reconvened.

The AA students' committee, too, lost its momentum, in part because Jellicoe's appointment calmed the waters in the school but mostly because the call-up for war service drastically reduced the student numbers and made the continuation of any organised activism illusory. Like other institutions in the capital, the AA bowed to government pressure and evacuated its school to safer quarters when the war broke out.[cvi] The small cohort of students which found itself transplanted to rural Barnet developed into a tight-knit artistic commune, but it lacked the aspiration and critical size to channel its collective spirit into formalised action. *Focus* ceased to exist when the editors failed to find a team of successors to continue their work,[cvii] and the AA council stifled any other extracurricular interests the students may have had. In February 1940 some of them expressed the wish to form a 'University Labour Federation Group', which was vetoed by the council at Jellicoe's behest, and in June the

council rejected the students' committee's request for permission to affiliate with the AASTA.[cviii] In both cases the students accepted the council's decision without much resistance. In fact, over the following years any organised student activity seems to have petered out completely, prompting Jellicoe's successor Frederick Gibberd to urge the students' committee to take a more active interest in the affairs of the school: 'At the moment it [is] inclined to be too lethargic and ready to leave individuals to do its work.'[cix]

Like the AA students' committee, the NASA went through an apathetic spell as wartime conditions made it increasingly difficult to maintain continuity in its aims and activities – challenging at the best of times for an inherently ephemeral association of student volunteers.[cx] However, this was merely a temporary setback, and the initiative once again came from Hull, where Max Lock, formerly a unit master at the AA, had in October 1939 succeeded Leslie Martin as the head of the school. No full-scale NASA congress could be organised in 1940, but in December that year Lock arranged an informal conference on architectural education at his school. Half a year prior in a letter to Lock, Anthony Cox had expressed the hope that, despite the dire prospects for progressive training methods and organised student activity during the war, at some schools, and at Lock's in particular, 'the machine [might] be kept ticking over, and nicely oiled and adjusted for terrific acceleration later.'[cxi] In a second letter sent on the eve of the conference at Hull he reiterated:

> [There] is one thing that we can do – or rather, that perhaps you at Hull, as the secretariat of the NASA can do. It is this. Run a magazine that will keep things alive amongst the students in all the schools – make the NASA into a kind of architectural Vigilance Association for education. […] Now, if ever, I should say, is the time when it's necessary to make the NASA into a national rather than purely Northern association. […] The point is that somewhere in this Country there must be some centre from which splinters can fly […].[cxii]

Lock appeared to heed Cox's advice as he went to great lengths to bring the various stakeholders to his conference. Justin Blanco White, who had worked in Martin's office at Hull (and had likely had a hand in getting Lock appointed as his successor), represented the AASTA; Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew represented the MARS Group; and William Allen, the chief architect at the government's Building Research Station, represented the education committee of the RIBA's Architectural Science Group.[cxiii] The northern schools responded enthusiastically to Lock's invitation, and students from both Scotland and the south of England attended the conference – albeit nobody from the AA.[cxiv] The void that was left by its dormant students' committee was filled by the reinvigorated (and for the duration of the war Cambridge-based) Bartlett Society, whose delegates – almost certainly the three editors of its bi-weekly journal, viz. John Eastwick-Field, Gordon Wigglesworth and O. D. Jones – promised to work towards the aim of a unified student movement by gathering the support of the southern schools.[cxv]

This aim was finally achieved when in May 1941 delegates from eleven schools gathered at the NASA congress in Cambridge to form a national association of architectural students.[cxvi] One month after the event, the council of the NASA met at Leeds to formally disband their organisation, replace the *NASA Journal* with a new publication called *PLAN* and inaugurate the Architectural Students' Association (ArchSA) as a national body divided into a northern, a central and a southern section. The Cambridge congress marked the culmination of the formative period in the history of the British architectural student movement. Closely affiliated with the National Union of Students, the ArchSA was to thrive on an anti-war platform, and in the postwar years it was to make a major contribution to the architectural discourse, organising the first international architectural students' conference at the RIBA and eventually, in June 1948, producing its long-awaited and highly controversial report on architectural education in collaboration with the MARS Group.[cxvii]

Conclusion

The inaugural congress of the Architectural Students' Association in 1941 marked the moment when an informal but increasingly interwoven network of student activists constituted itself as a national body – the first of its kind in the world. Of the different groups which made up this network, the AA students' committee was by far the most effective and – through the students' magazine *Focus* – best publicised. Benefitting from the AA's uniquely permissive setup and supported by sympathetic members of staff, the students set in motion a course of events which towards the end of the 1930s effectively ended the Beaux-Arts regime at their school. Their activities overlapped with those of the Junior Members' Committee, which the RIBA had set up in 1935 in response to the growing appeal of schismatic bodies such as the ATO and the AASTA. Being constitutionally recognised by their parent organisations gave both committees a direct means of influence, and the AA students' committee at least managed to take full advantage of its privileges. However, affiliation also meant that the fate of these committees was intrinsically linked to that of the larger organisation, and when the war broke out they both ceased to be an active force – temporarily so in the case of the AA students' committee but permanently in the case of the dissolved JMC. Only the Northern Architectural Students' Association, the oldest and only independent student body, managed to recapture its momentum, and it was due to its organisational acumen, honed in years of inter-school cooperation, that the vision of a nationwide architectural students' association eventually came to fruition.

The three student organisations discussed in this paper – the NASA, the JMC and the AA students' committee – shared a common desire to see architectural training reflect the changes affecting the nature of professional practice, specifically the rise of modernism and the public sector. This desire found its manifestation in the AA students' Yellow Book, which put an emphasis on group work and promoted the aim of turning architectural education from

a primarily vocational into a broader intellectual pursuit by calling for more advanced lecture courses and correspondingly higher entry levels. After the Second World War such concerns contributed to a revived debate on architectural education, but it was not until the Oxford Conference of 1958 that the RIBA enshrined the notion of a university-type education based on high academic standards as the cornerstone of its educational policy.

This paper has demonstrated that, rather than a group of outsiders infiltrating the RIBA, many of the public-sector modernists who in the mid-1950s came to dominate its higher echelons and organised its Oxford Conference were in fact seasoned committeemen who resumed a course of action which they had tested a quarter of a century prior, some of them when they were still students. Richard Llewelyn Davies, Leslie Martin and Richard Sheppard were active members of the RIBA's Junior Members' Committee. Martin, who chaired the Oxford Conference, had in 1939 arranged a highly successful NASA congress, and William Allen, one of the co-organisers, had attended the following NASA conference at Hull as well as the inaugural ArchSA congress at Cambridge, using both occasions to advance his call for a science-based approach to architectural education (which he tried – and failed – to realise when he became the AA's principal in the early 1960s).[cxviii] Amongst the carefully vetted invitees to the Oxford Conference were several other activists of the 1930s, notably AA student leader and *Focus* editor Anthony Cox, JMC founder and chairman Thornton White as well as Hubert Bennett and Denis Harper, both former members of the JMC's education subcommittee. When the RIBA instituted its Junior Members' Committee the *Architects' Journal* warned that it 'must not be used to side-track the younger members' otherwise inconvenient enthusiasm but to train it for participation in active administration.'[cxix] Given the subsequent career trajectories of many of its members, this is precisely what it did.

If the call for an architectural education of a high intellectual order, the core principle agreed at the Oxford Conference, can ultimately be traced to the debates taking place within

the different franchises of student activism in the 1930s, it is worth emphasising that these latter shared a common catalyst. In both London and the north of Britain the students' preoccupation with educational questions was stimulated by Walter Gropius, who in the winter of 1935/36 addressed separate meetings of the NASA and the JMC, triggering a controversy on architectural education which would continue for several months and find its climax in the Yellow Book. Crinson and Lubbock are right in stating that the Bauhaus did not have 'much of an impact upon British architectural schools before the war, and certainly not in terms of any systematic educational theory.'[cxx] However, through Gropius's agency, it did have a manifest impact on those student activists who in the mid-1930s began to apply their thoughts to the desired parameters of such a theory and in 1958 made them the pillars of the RIBA's educational policy – a policy which in its core has not changed since. The reform agenda pursued within the networks of student activism in the pre-war period thus offers a direct link between the Bauhaus and the creation of a modernist educational system in Britain in the second half of the twentieth century. Given the scarcity of his architectural output, Gropius's part in motivating this agenda was arguably his most enduring legacy in this country.

[i] L. Martin, 'Conference on Architectural Education', *RIBA Journal*, 65, 8 (June 1958), pp. 281-282.

[ii] M. Crinson, J. Lubbock, *Architecture – art or profession?* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 131.

[iii] Ibid.

[iv] Ibid., p. 138.

[v] Ibid., pp. 100-101, 107; A. Powers, 'Liverpool and Architectural Education in the Early Twentieth Century' in J. Sharples, ed., *Charles Reilly & The Liverpool School of Architecture 1904-1933* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1996), pp. 15-20; E. Darling, *Re-forming Britain* (New York, Routledge, 2007), pp. 182-183.

[vi] E. Gunn, 'Rational or Modern?', *Architect and Building News*, 6 July 1934, p. 8.

[vii] Crinson and Lubbock 1994, p. 108.

[viii] Gordon Stephenson, letter to William Holford, 20 Nov 1932, Special Collections & Archives, Sydney Jones Library, University of Liverpool (hereafter cited as UOL), D147/P17/1/2; 'School Notes', *RIBA Journal*, 41, 17 (21 July 1934), p. 938.

[ix] A. Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1987), p. 3; Crinson and Lubbock 1994, pp. 104-105; J. R. Gold, *The Experience of Modernism: Modern Architects and the Future City, 1928-1953* (London, E & FN Spon, 1997), pp. 142-144; E. Harwood, *Space, Hope and Brutalism* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2015), p. xiii; Darling 2007, pp. 182, 191-206.

[x] Stephenson, letters to William Holford, 16 [Jan] 1933, 3 Feb 1933, 15 Feb 1933, UOL, D147/P17/1/2.

[xi] 'Report of Students' Sub-committee on the School System', [May] 1937, rpt. in: *Focus*, 3 (Spring 1939), pp. 87-96 (hereafter cited as Yellow Book).

[xii] 'The AA Story, 1936-1939', *Focus*, 3 (Spring 1939), pp. 95

[xiii] Crinson and Lubbock 1994, p. 103.

[xiv] Darling 2007, p. 187.

[xv] Architectural Students' Association, 'The Origins and Development of National Architectural Student Activity – in Great Britain', Feb 1944, private collection, p. 1.

[xvi] The best account of the changing situation and mindset of young architects in the 1930s remains: J. Summerson, 'Bread & Butter and Architecture', *Horizon*, 6 (Oct 1942), pp. 233-234.

[xvii] Darling 2007, p. 47.

[xviii] P. Shepheard, 'Obituary: Lionel Bailey Budden', *RIBA Journal*, 63, 11 (Sep 1956), p. 478; see also: L. Budden, 'Synthesis in Architecture: The Contemporary Process', ibid., 41, 15 (23 June 1934), p. 813.

[xix] K. Easton, 'The Northern Architectural Students' Association', *RIBA Journal*, 43, 10 (21 March 1936), p. 549.

[xx] *Focus*, 3 (Spring 1939), p. 9; see also: Easton 1936, op. cit., p. 549.

[xxi] Kenneth Easton (Hon. Secretary, NASA), letter to Walter Gropius, 12 Nov 1935, MS Ger 208.2 (599), Houghton Library, Harvard University.

[xxii] Gropius, letter to Easton, ibid.; Easton 1936, p. 549; 'The Northern Architectural Students' Association – Secretary's Reports on Activities, 1936-7', *NASA Journal*, 1, 2 (Oct 1937), p. 7.

[xxiii] Easton 1936, p. 549.

[xxiv] Ibid., p. 550; NASA – Secretary's Reports, 1936-37, op. cit., p. 7. The congress resolutions on architectural education were published in the first issue of the *NASA Journal*, of which no copy appears to have survived.

[xxv] Ibid., p. 8.

[xxvi] Ibid., p. 9; J. H. Elliott (Hon. Secretary, NASA), 'Report of Council Meeting, Leeds, June 26, 1937', ibid., p. 14.

[xxvii] NASA – Secretary's Reports, 1936-37, p. 7.

[xxviii] Ibid.

[xxix] 'The Northern Architectural Students' Association – Fourth Annual Congress, Leeds', *NASA Journal*, 1, 2 (Oct 1937), p. 10.

[xxx] J. H. Elliott, 'Report of Council Meeting, Leeds, November 20, 1937', *NASA Journal*, 2, 1 (Feb 1938), pp. 12-13.

[xxxi] Quoted in: NASA – Fourth Annual Congress, Leeds, op. cit., p. 11.

[xxxii] Elliott, Council Meeting, June 1937, op. cit., p. 15.

[xxxiii] P. Owen, 'NASA Congress, 1938', *NASA Journal*, 2, 2 (June 1938), p. 13; 'Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 1938', ibid., 3, 1 (Feb 1939), p. 6.

[xxxiv] *Architect and Building News*, 10 March 1939, p. 289.

[xxxv] 'NASA Congress, March 2-4, 1939', *NASA Journal*, 3, 1 (Feb 1939), pp. 8-10; 'Symposium: Architecture, Science, Economics and Society', ibid., 3, 2 (Summer 1939), pp. 21-28.

[xxxvi] 'News: The NASA Congress, Hull', *Architects' Journal*, 9 March 1939, p. 400; 'Architectural Education', *Focus*, 4 (Summer 1939), p. 84.

[xxxvii] Royal Institute of British Architects, *The RIBA Kalendar 1925-1926* (London, RIBA, 1925), p. 55.

[xxxviii] A. Seymour Reeves, 'AASTA and RIBA Association Severed', *Architect and Building News*, 6 April 1934, p.6.

[xxxix] *RIBA Journal*, 42, 4 (22 Dec 1934), p. 223.

[xl] P. Coe, M. Reading, *Lubetkin and Tecton: Architecture and Social Commitment* (London, Arts Council of Great Britain, 1981), pp. 51-54; J. Allan, *Berthold Lubetkin: Architecture and the Tradition of Progress* (London, RIBA Publications, 1992), pp. 323-324.

[xli] Val Harding, letter to the editor, *Architect and Building News*, 22 Feb 1935, p. 243.

[xlii] E. Maxwell Fry, letter to the editor, ibid., 1 March 1935, p. 272; Basil Ward, letter to the editor, ibid.

[xliii] *RIBA Journal*, 42, 10 (23 March 1935), p. 571; ibid., 42, 18 (10 Aug 1935), p. 1064.

[xliv] Meeting of the JMC, 30 July 1935, in *Junior Members' Committee Minutes, 1935-1939*, RIBA/MEMREL 12.1.5, RIBA Archives, London (hereafter cited as RIBA/MEMREL 12.1.5), 1, p. 1.

[xlv] Ibid., p. 2.

[xlvi] JMC, 24 Oct 1935, ibid., p. 8.

[xlvii] *RIBA Journal*, 43, 3 (7 Dec 1935), p. 115.

[xlviii] For Ansell's paper see: W. H. Ansell, 'Architectural Education', *RIBA Journal*, 43, 11 (4 April 1936), pp. 565-579; for the IGM see: 'Architectural Education', ibid., 43, 15 (6 June 1936), pp. 813-817.

[xlix] M. J. Blanco-White, letter to the editor, *Architects' Journal*, 5 March 1936, p. 369; see also: JMC, 10 Dec 1935, RIBA/MEMREL 12.1.5, 1, p. 12.

[l] For the ATO enquiry see comments by John Summerson, Anthony Cox and Richard Llewelyn Davies in 'Architectural Education', June 1936, op. cit., pp. 813, 815, 816.

[li] Skinner, letter to the editor, *RIBA Journal*, 43, 11 (4 April 1936), p. 607.

[lii] Skinner, letter to the editor, ibid., 43, 14 (23 May 1936), p. 71.

[liii] JMC, 8 Oct 1936, RIBA/MEMREL 12.1.5, 1, pp. 33-34.

[liv] JMC, 5 Nov 1936, ibid., p. 38; Ian MacAlister (Secretary, RIBA), letter to the Hon. Secretary of the JMC, 19 November 1936, att. to JMC, 10 Dec 1936, ibid., p. 41.

[lv] L. W. Thornton White, letter to J. W. Curtis (Clerk, JMC), n.d., att. to JMC, 14 Jan 1937, RIBA/MEMREL 12.1.5, 1, p. 46; see also: JMC, 8 Oct 1936, ibid., p. 34; Thomas Mitchell (Hon. Secretary, JMC), letter to Everard Haynes (Secretary, BAE), 29 Oct 1936, att. to Meeting of the BAE Schools Committee, 3 June 1937, in *Schools Committee Minutes, 1926-1973*, RIBA/ED 7.1.3, RIBA Archive, London. Thornton White left England in early February 1937 to take up the chair at Cape Town University.

[lvi] JMC, 6 May 1937, ibid., p. 60.

[lvii] John H. Elliott (Secretary, NASA), letter to John Summerson (Chairman, JMC), 21 Dec 1937, att. to JMC, 20 Jan 1938, ibid., p. 78.

[lviii] Ian MacAlister (Secretary, RIBA), letter to H. Myles Wright (Hon. Secretary, JMC), 10 March 1938, att. to JMC, 10 March 1938, ibid., p. 86.

[lix] Ibid.; see also: JMC, 10 Feb 1938, ibid., p. 83.

[lx] Ibid., pp. 82-83.

[lxi] JMC, 10 March 1938, ibid., p. 87.

[lxii] 'Report of the Sub-committee upon the practicability of making the Junior Members Committee of the RIBA into a representative body. May 1938', att. to JMC, 12 May 1938, ibid., p. 95.

[lxiii] JMC, 28 July 1938, ibid., p. 99.

[lxiv] JMC, 3 November 1938, ibid., pp. 107-108.

[lxv] [F. L. Sturrock], 'Architectural Education – Report of the Sub-Committee of the Junior Members' Committee', att. to JMC, 12 Jan 1939, ibid., p. 118. Sturrock followed Thornton White to Cape Town, as did shortly after another member of the JMC's education subcommittee, Denis Harper.

[lxvi] JMC, 12 Jan 1939, ibid., pp. 117-118; JMC, ibid., 2, p. 1.

[lxvii] See e.g.: JMC, 10 May 1939, ibid., p. 12; see also: 'Report of the Council for the Official Year 1938-1939', op. cit.

[lxviii] For a general history of the AA see: J. Summerson, *The Architectural Association 1847-1947*, London 1947.

[lxix] Architectural Association, *School of Architecture Prospectus 1921* (London, AA, 1921), AA Archive, London, p. 23.

[lxx] Darling 2007, p. 185.

[lxxi] 'School Exhibitions', *Architects' Journal*, 25 July 1935, pp. 121-124.

[lxxii] 'AA Story', op. cit., p. 82.

[lxxiii] Meeting of the AA School Committee, 14 Jan 1936, in *Minutes of the AA School Committee 1928-1937*, AA Archives, London, Box C402b (hereafter cited as AA/SCM 1928-37), p. 180; for the proposal itself see: 'Proposed Re-organisation of the School', att. to Meeting of the AA Council, 22 Jan 1936, in *Minutes of the AA Council 1935-1940,* ibid., Box 2007:36 (hereafter cited as AA/CM 1935-40), pp. 46-52.

[lxxiv] Ibid., p. 42.

[lxxv] AA School Committee, 16 March 1934, AA/SCM 1928-37, p. 122.

[lxxvi] See e.g. letters from Vincent Rother (*Architects' Journal*, 12 Dec 1935, p. 871); John Ratcliffe, David Pye and Keith Beal (ibid., 19 Dec 1935, p. 916); R. T. Walters (ibid., 26 Dec 1935, p. 954); Anthony Cox (ibid., 2 Jan 1936, p. 15); Denys Lasdun (ibid.); John Madge (ibid.); Richard [Llewelyn] Davies (ibid., 23 Jan 1936, p. 160); F. L. Sturrock (ibid.).

[lxxvii] 'AA Story', p. 84. The fact that the students' committee – two days after Rowse had first presented his scheme in the confidential setting of a school committee meeting and six days before the council itself was made aware of it – had managed to prepare a report as basis for discussion at this meeting supports the assumption that Rowse's prospective system was widely known in AA circles.

[lxxviii] A Group of Eleven Students, 'The Analysis and Plan of Contemporary Education for Architecture', *Architects' Journal*, 21 March 1936, pp. 413-414.

[lxxix] Ibid., p. 414.

[lxxx] Ibid.

[lxxxi] Martin Briggs, quoted in: Ansell 1936, op. cit., pp. 578.

[lxxxii] 'AA Story', pp. 84-85; see also: 'Architectural Education', June 1936, op. cit., pp. 813-817; AA Council, 4 July 1938, AA/CM 1935-40, pp. 302-305.

[lxxxiii] H. S. Goodhart-Rendel, 'Architectural Education', *AA Journal*, 52, 601 (March 1937), pp. 381-384.

[lxxxiv] AA Council, 26 Jan 1937, AA/CM 1935-40, p. 149.

[lxxxv] Goodhart-Rendel, 'Architectural Education', p. 382.

[lxxxvi] Yellow Book, op. cit, quotes p. 95; for a discussion see: Crinson and Lubbock 1994, pp. 103-104; Darling 2007, pp. 187-188.

[lxxxvii] 'AA Story', p. 86.

[lxxxviii] H. S. Goodhart-Rendel, 'The Training of an Architect', *AA Journal*, 53, 613 (March 1938), pp. 403-416.

[lxxxix] AA Council, 29 March 1938, AA/CM 1935-40, pp. 261-262; see also: 'AA Story', pp. 99-104.

[xc] AA Council, 3 May 1938, 4 July 1938, AA/CM 1935-40, pp. 265-266, 305.

[xci] A. Cox, 'The Training of an Architect. An Open Letter to H. S. Goodhart-Rendel', *Focus*, 1 (Summer 1938), pp. 24-32; 'Editorial', *Focus*, no. 2 (Winter 1938), pp. 9-10.

[xcii] AA Council, 13 July 1938, AA/CM 1935-40, pp. 309-310.

[xciii] Verner O. Rees (President, AA), quoted in: H. B. Wallis, 'Interview Memorandum', 9 Aug 1938, in *Records created or inherited by the Department of Education and Science, and of related bodies*, The National Archives, Kew, TNA: ED 90/422; see also: AA Council, 21 July 1938, 6 Oct 1938, AA/CM 1935-40, pp. 327, 343.

[xciv] Darling 2007, p. 190; see also: AA Council, 6 Oct 1938, AA/CM 1935-40, p. 344.

[xcv] G. Jellicoe, 'The Principal's Address to the School', *AA Journal*, 54, 625 (March 1939), pp. 209-211; see also: AA Council, 4 July 1938, CM 1935-40, pp. 304-305.

[xcvi] Sturrock, Report, op. cit.; JMC, 9 Feb 1939, RIBA/MEMREL 12.1.5, vol. 1, p. 122.

[xcvii] AA Council, 22 Feb 1938, 22 March 1938, AA/CM 1935-40, pp. 242, 251.

[xcviii] 'Editorial', *Focus*, 2 (Winter 1938), p. 3; 'Editorial', ibid., 3 (Spring 1939), pp. 5-6, 9-10.

[xcix] A. S. Buckley, I. Burke, C. J. Cooper, 'Editorial', *NASA Journal*, 3, 2 (Summer 1939), pp. 5-6; 'NASA Congress, Hull 1939', ibid., p. 17.

[c] Buckley et al., 'Editorial', p. 5.

[ci] Ibid.

[cii] 'Architectural Education', *Focus*, 4 (Summer 1939), p. 83.

[ciii] 'The Report of the Council for the Official Year 1939-1940', *RIBA Journal*, 47, 6 (15 April 1940), p. 130.

[civ] JMC, 25 July 1939, RIBA/MEMREL 12.1.5, 2, p. 27.

[cv] 'Events and Comments', *Architect and Building News*, 161 (9 Feb 1940), p. 151; 'Points from Papers and Addresses', ibid., 162 (10 May 1940), p. 124.

[cvi] AA Council, 13 Sep 1939, AA/CM 1935-40, pp. 444-447.

[cvii] Anthony Cox, letter to Max Lock, 9 Dec 1940, Max Lock Archive, University of Westminster, London (hereafter cited as Westminster/MLA), Box 11.7.

[cviii] Meetings of the AA School Committee, 6 Feb 1940, 17 June 1940, in *Minutes of the AA School Committee 1937-1944*, AA Archives, London, Box C402a, pp. 125-126, 140-141.

[cix] AA School Committee, 9 March 1942, ibid., p. 173. Gibberd had succeeded Jellicoe in November 1941.

[cx] Architectural Students' Association 1944, op. cit., p. 4.

[cxi] Cox, letter to Lock, 14 March 1940, Westminster/MLA, Box 11.7.

[cxii] Cox to Lock, 9 Dec 1940, op. cit.

[cxiii] 'Northern Architectural Students' Association: Conference at Hull', *Architect and Building News*, 3 Jan 1941, pp. 4-5; see also: Justin Blanco White, letters to Max Lock, 20 Sep 1939, 30 Sep 1939, Westminster/MLA, Box 11.7.

[cxiv] Lock, letter to Cobb, 30 Nov 1940, ibid.; 'NASA Conference at Hull – "Architectural Education and the Post-War Architect"', *Bartlett Journal*, 1 (1941), p. 7.

[cxv] Ibid., p. 8. The Bartlett Society had been dormant for years. In February 1941 Eastwick-Field, Wigglesworth and Jones took charge of its journal and organised a series of well-attended talks by distinguished guest lecturers.

[cxvi] Architectural Students' Association 1944, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

[cxvii] 'MARS/ArchSA Committee on Architectural Education – Interim Report', June 1948, in *MARS Group File*, AA Library, London, 72.036(42) MARS (published in an abridged version as: Andrew Derbyshire, 'Interim Report of MARS/ArchSA Committee on Architectural Education', *PLAN*, 3 (1948), pp. 19-22).

[cxviii] See: [W. Allen], lecture notes, NASA congress, Hull, 14 Dec 1941, Westminster/MLA, Box 11.7.

[cxix] 'RIBA Junior', *Architects' Journal*, 11 April 1935, p. 545.

[cxx] Crinson and Lubbock 1994, pp. 97-98.